

# **GRASMERE ACADEMY**

## **GOVERNING BODY ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2024/25**

### **Context**

Grasmere Academy is a company limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 5 July 2012. The Governors (who are Trustees under the Charities Act 2011 and Directors under the Companies Act 2006) annually publish a report together with the financial statements and auditor's report of the Charitable Company.

The Governing body operates in accordance with its Memorandum and Articles of Association, as well as within a broader legal and regulatory framework, adhering to, for example, its Funding Agreement with the Department for Education and the Academy Trust Handbook.

The Academy has a detailed system of delegation of responsibilities which is agreed annually by the full Governing body. It has an approved Code of Conduct and Standing Orders as well as terms of reference for its committees and all are reviewed annually.

The purpose of governance as outlined in the Academy Trust Governance Guide (March 2024) is to provide:

- strategic leadership
- accountability and assurance
- strategic engagement

The board also has strategic and statutory responsibility for:

- safeguarding and special educational needs and disabilities arrangements
- promotion of pupil welfare
- keeping the trust's estates safe and well-maintained

### **Membership**

A list of Governors and their roles is detailed below:

| <b>Governor</b>           | <b>Category</b> |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Lynn Goossens (Chair)     | Community       |
| *Adam Rayner (Vice Chair) | Community       |
| Matthew Maplesden         | Co-opted        |
| Lucy McCluskey            | Co-opted        |
| Adele Rigby               | Co-opted        |
| David Baldwin             | Founding        |
| David Hodgson             | Founding        |
| Kerry Lilico              | Headteacher     |
| Hannah Girvan             | Staff           |

*\*Resigned on 20/06/25*

During the year there were 3 Parent Governor vacancies despite recruitment activity taking place.

### **Governance arrangements**

The full Governing body meets twice per term and has three committees which consider different aspects of the school enabling the full Governing Body to adopt a strategic approach as follows:

- Finance, Staffing and Premises (meets twice termly)

- Health, Safety and Safeguarding (meets termly)
- Quality (meets termly)

There are also three committees that meet as and when required during the academic year:

- Admissions
- Pupil Discipline
- Performance Management

Committees membership and governor links are as follows:

| <b>Committees</b>                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Finance, Staffing and Premises</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>Adam Rayner (Community)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)<br>Hannah Girvan (Staff)<br>Matt Maplesden (Co-opted) | <b>Quality</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>David Baldwin (Founding)<br>Adele Rigby (Community)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher) |
| <b>Health, Safety and Safeguarding</b><br>Hannah Girvan (Staff)<br>Lucy McCluskey (Co-opted)<br>David Baldwin (Founding)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)                            | <b>Performance Management</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>Colin Lofthouse (CEO, Smart MAT)                                   |
| <b>Pupil Discipline</b><br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>Plus 1 x Governor                                                                                                         | <b>Admissions</b><br>Lynn Goossens (Community)<br>David Hodgson (Founding)<br>Kerry Lilico (Headteacher)                         |

| <b>Governor Links</b>                   |                    |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Area</b>                             | <b>Governor(s)</b> |
| Early Years                             | Adam Rayner        |
| Equality                                | Lynn Goossens      |
| Health & Safety                         | David Hodgson      |
| Safeguarding & Child Protection/CIOC/YC | Lynn Goossens      |
| SEND                                    | David Baldwin      |

### Attendance Record

Meetings must be attended by a minimum number of governors to ensure that decisions are legally binding. The Governors' attendance record for 2024/25 is detailed below:

| <b>Governor</b>   | <b>Category</b> | <b>GB mtgs</b> | <b>F,S&amp;P Com</b> | <b>H,S&amp;S Com</b> | <b>Quality Com</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Lynn Goossens     | Community       | 8/8            | 6/6                  |                      | 3/3                |
| Adam Rayner       | Community       | 2/6            | 4/6                  |                      |                    |
| Matthew Maplesden | Co-opted        | 6/8            | 5/6                  |                      |                    |
| Lucy McCluskey    | Co-opted        | 4/6            |                      | 1/3                  |                    |
| Adele Rigby       | Co-opted        | 2/7            |                      |                      | 2/2                |
| David Hodgson     | Founding        | 4/8            | 4/6                  | 1/3                  |                    |
| David Baldwin     | Founding        | 8/8            |                      | 3/3                  | 2/3                |
| Kerry Lilico      | Headteacher     | 8/8            | 6/6                  | 3/3                  | 3/3                |

|               |       |     |     |     |  |
|---------------|-------|-----|-----|-----|--|
| Hannah Girvan | Staff | 8/8 | 6/6 | 3/3 |  |
|---------------|-------|-----|-----|-----|--|

Given the challenges the Academy had faced around the budget and the need to submit a UCS bid two extraordinary governing body meetings were also held in the Summer term.

### **Review of the year**

Work continued throughout the year to address the actions identified in the last Ofsted inspection, to embed the SEN Unit in the school, to progress the bid for DfE funding to repair the structural building issues and the transfer of the Academy to Smart MAT. Governors had also completely reviewed and updated the Risk Register in light of newly identified risks to the Academy.

#### Autumn term

Governors adopted the National Governance Association's latest Code of Conduct and reconfirmed its Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation, Committees membership and Governor link roles.

Work commenced on a DfE Urgent Capital Support (UCS) bid to repair the structural building issues. Quotes were obtained by the Architects for a suitable structural engineer, a fire consultant, a mechanical and electrical consultant and a surveyor to digitally measure the building.

The transfer of the Academy to Smart MAT was put on hold until Smart's Trustees were confident in the Academy's financial position and the outcome of the UCS bid.

Work took place to embed the SEN Unit in the school and the limitations on space for the KS1 Unit had provided challenges for staff to try to overcome.

#### Spring term

Two new Co-opted Governors had joined the Governing body, one from the local high school and the other from Stephenson Memorial Primary School.

Work progressed on the UCS bid and the financial reporting tool was discussed as the Finance, Staffing and Premises Committee felt greater clarity was required and a new reporting format was instituted.

The Headteacher, the Chair and NTAF's Chair had pursued partnership work with the LA to utilise part of the repaired building that the school might not require once it was able to be used again. Discussions also took place around partnership working with other local authorities.

#### Summer term

The procurement process was completed for the company to carry out the structural repair works, which would take around 13 weeks to complete. Further work was completed on the budget and reporting format which had given governors assurance that the Academy continued to be a going concern. The UCS bid was submitted to the DfE at the end of the term. Smart MAT had indicated that a decision on whether the Academy could transfer to Smart would only be made after due diligence was carried out again given it had been some time since it was first carried out.

### **Effectiveness**

- Took decisions to financially stabilise the school.
- Took decisions to address the structural building issues.
- Reviewed and monitored statutory policies as well as school policies and ensured safeguarding compliance.

- Benchmarked the school's budget against similar local schools and nationally and ensured the accounts were submitted to the DfE on time.
- Monitored the Pupil Premium and Catch-up funding spending and strategies to ensure money was well spent and effectively used.
- Reviewed the Development Plan in the Quality Committee.

**Plans for next academic year**

- Await the outcome of the UCS bid and if the Academy isn't successful then consider other options.
- Progress plans to join Smart MAT.

**How you can contact the Governing body**

We always welcome suggestions, feedback and ideas. Please contact the Clerk to the Governing body via email at: [jacqui@schoolclerk.co.uk](mailto:jacqui@schoolclerk.co.uk).